



2nd International Conference of Photography Studies (ICPS2025)

PUBLISHING PHOTOGRAPHY: MATERIALITIES, NARRATIVES, ASSEMBLAGES

November 19–21, 2025

Colégio dos Jesuítas, University of Madeira
Funchal, Madeira, Portugal

Call for Proposals

With the interplay between digital images and the internet, the democratisation that photography embodied when it first emerged in the 19th century has unfolded exponentially.

This democratisation was deepened with the almost universal reach of contemporary photographic practice – primarily through mobile phones – and with the possibility of anyone being the publisher of their own photographs and videos.

Never before in photography's history has its production and publication been so abundant, with the processes of creation and dissemination now nearly contiguous, often streamlined by automatic editing options in integrated software and digital platforms.

Over the years, social media has gradually evolved into more visually content-reliant platforms, depending increasingly on images rather than text.

These platforms have become evident and potent contemporary forms of publishing photography and have contributed to disseminating a normative image practice, the visibility of which relies on algorithms with logics and criteria often invisible and unknown to viewers.

In this context, images function within a competitive regime of visibility and transience, constantly vying for our attention, engagement, and validation as they seek to assert themselves within a networked environment.

In an era when digital media appear more accessible, socially engaging, and less costly in terms of making images available than traditional editorial forms of photographic dissemination, such as the printed press or books, the constant flow of similar, spectacularly redundant images that reach us daily produces an effect of hyperstimulation and numbness, risking the obliteration of the possibility for a poetic relationship with images.

Alternative strategies for creating and circulating photographic images have emerged in parallel with, or even in reaction to, this media sphere. For instance, online editorial experiments explore digital aesthetics that challenge and often critique stereotypical



'Instagrammed' images and the seriality of slideshow visualisation modes, frequently exposing the normative apparatus within which images operate today.

Alongside these digital experiments, more traditional forms of publishing and circulating photography—diverse in nature but often tangible—have existed throughout history.

Some have since been integrated into archival collections, yet they continue to circulate today as digital images, acquiring new functions and meanings in the process. Examples include «cartes de visite», stereocards, photo albums, catalogues, and various forms of the illustrated press, ranging from newspapers and magazines to photo-romans, alternative zines, and artist books—each offering unique ways of engaging with and disseminating photographic images.

Among these, the printed photo book stands out today as a particular artistic practice, poetic medium, and intermedial example of publishing photography. The artist's book explores specific and often mixed materialities and enjoys particular vitality worldwide, with multiple authors offering a wide range of perspectives, varying editions and formats, and often relying on digital printing and diffusion strategies. It stands as a form of resistance to the dematerialisation of art by providing a tangible, unique, and intense experience with photography.

In this edition of the International Conference of Photography Studies, we aim to explore different expressions, strategies and media for publishing photography.

We invite submissions that address the diverse challenges and dimensions of publishing photography, focusing on works that engage distinct materialities, narratives, and forms of assemblage as a means of resisting the reified modes of image practices.

We accept proposals for oral presentations, artistic research workshops, performance presentations, and other forms of expression not exceeding 20 minutes on the following topics, among others:

- The disseminated printed photographic image (i.e. illustrated press, books, magazines);
- Practices of publishing as strategies of resistance: the photo-book as a poetic medium;
- Non-canonical or hybrid formats: the relationship between printed images and digital environments;
- Established narratives and peripheral visualities;
- Archival orders: publishing as an 'unarchival' gesture;
- Art, activism and public histories;
- Collaborative projects: shared authorships;



- Ecological processes in the edition of images;
- Images as data streams: ubiquity and the poetics of montage.

Submission guidelines

We invite proposals for 20-minute presentations with:

- a) Title and abstract of 500 words maximum (no references), and 3-5 keywords;
- b) The name of the author with current affiliation, contact details (email and mobile) and a short biographical note (around 200 words). This should be sent in a separate document.

The two documents (abstract, contact details and bio) should be sent to photographyconference@fcs.unl.pt in Word format, **no later than 30th May 2025**.

Notification of acceptance will be sent by 30th June 2025.

Other details

- Communications, Portuguese, English, and Spanish languages are accepted.
- Artistic/hybrid presentations should be a maximum of 20 minutes and include audiovisual, sound, or performative actions. These proposals might be accompanied by a 3-4 minute short excerpt or an illustrated description, together with the abstract, keywords, and bibliographical references if needed. In all cases, a biographical note should be sent (around 200 words).
- Sessions will be organised based on thematic affinities, regardless of their nature (academic/artistic/hybrid); all papers will be considered equally valid academic outputs.
- Accepted proposals will be validated through registration, but no fees shall be applied.
- Participation in the conference is exclusively in-person.

For more information and conference updates, please visit the [website](#).

Questions may be sent to [the official conference email](#).

Important Dates:

- Deadline for submissions: May 30, 2025
- Notification of authors: June 30, 2025
- Conference: November 19 – 21, 2025

Organisation: Regional Secretariat of Economy, Tourism and Culture through the Regional Directorate for Culture & the Regional Directorate of Archives, Libraries, and Book; ICNOVA – NOVA Institute of Communication; University of Madeira, Council of Culture & Department of Art and Design.